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Curran, Edward: Confirmation Hearing (1985)

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1985

# Curran, Edward: Confirmation Hearing (1985): Correspondence 04

Merrily E. Taylor

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September 13, 1985

RECEIVED  
SEP 20 1985  
WASHINGTON, D.C.

Senator Claiborne Pell  
U. S. Senate, 335 SR08  
Washington, D. C. 21510

Dear Senator Pell:

I am aware that no Senator is more concerned than are you about the continued welfare of the National Endowment for the Humanities, and so I feel that I can rely on you to take a hard look at the appropriateness of Edward A. Curran to be NEH Chairman.

As you know, the Brown University Library has been the beneficiary of a number of NEH grants, most recently to support our June 1984 conference on "Lincoln and the American Political Tradition." This conference attracted more than 200 Lincoln scholars and collectors from all over the United States. NEH funds underwrote the production of a new guide to our prestigious McLellan Lincoln Collection (one of the three best in the nation), and the University of Massachusetts Press will be publishing a book of the conference papers. The Lincoln Conference is typical of the good done by NEH, in that without funding by this agency the nation's scholars would have been denied both the value of the event and of the enhanced access to the Brown collections which arose from it.

Mr. Curran appears to have had a productive career in secondary education, but I see nothing in his background to indicate that he is committed to the humanities as such or to the importance of research collections to this country's present and future. Through its preservation programs, NEH has insured the continuing existence of priceless scholarly material which might otherwise have vanished. In reviewing Mr. Curran's nomination, I hope that you will examine his views on NEH's current role, particularly in regard to research libraries and the preservation of their collections.

I appreciate very much your continued support for libraries and higher education. Best wishes,

Sincerely yours,

Merrily E. Taylor  
University Librarian

cc: Robert Reichley  
Samuel A. Streit